

Current Articles & Research Resources, November 29

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In this weekly post, we feature helpful research tools and recent articles of interest to the legislative community.

- Consider the unauthorized immigrant **population** in the U.S. (Pew Research Center, November 27, 2018)
- Explore the state of the current U.S. **military**. (The Heritage Foundation, ©2019)
- Read about how the connotations of the word **"political"** have changed over time. (OUPblog, November 23, 2018)
- Examine how shifting economic activity affects the **prosperity** of different communities and regions. (The Hamilton Project, September 2018)

Members of the Texas legislative community may request the articles below [here](#) or by calling 512-463-1252.

- "Public flagships are offering more middle-income scholarships. What gives?" By Chris Quintana. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 9, 2018, p. A32. Highlights financial-aid packages from public flagship universities aimed at students from middle-income families. Mentions the University of Texas at Austin has expanded income limits for students eligible for financial aid.
- "Rowlett condemnation case tests post-*Kelo* statute." By Janet Elliott. *Dallas Business Journal*, November 9, 2018, p. 9. Reports on a pending case before the Texas Supreme Court, *KMS Retail Rowlett, LP v. City of Rowlett, Texas*, which examines the limitations placed on the use of eminent domain codified in Texas Government Code § 2206.001. Related information at: <http://www.search.txcourts.gov/Case.aspx?cn=17-0850&coa=cossup> and <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.2206.htm#2206.001>.
- "Farming in America: Tough row to hoe." *Economist*, November 10th-16th, 2018, pp. 67-69. Examines the impact of President Trump's trade policy on American agriculture. Expects farm incomes to drop by thirteen percent this year, as more than a fifth of agricultural exports face new tariffs.
- "Post-*Wayfair* options for states." By Joseph Bishop-Henchman, Hannah Walker, and Denise Grabe. *Journal of MultiState Taxation and Incentives*, November/December 2018, pp. 6-19, 46, 48. Describes the effect of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *South Dakota v. Wayfair* on state Internet sales tax laws and presents a "Wayfair checklist" and policy choices for state legislators. Characterizes Texas as a "steady yellow light" state, meaning it should only proceed after making legislative changes, including joining the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement [SSUTA]. Related information at: https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/17pdf/17-494_j4el.pdf.
- "Would state-based single-payer health insurance cure what ails?" By Simon F. Haeder. *Milken Institute Review*, 4th Quarter 2018, pp. 43-53. Describes the characteristics and cost savings of a single-payer health insurance system, as well as the potential for single-payer to develop in the states amid the limits of federalism and the complexity of the health insurance market.
- "Firearm homicides and suicides in major metropolitan areas—United States, 2012–2013 and 2015–2016." By Scott R. Kegler, Linda L. Dahlberg, and James A. Mercy. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*, November 9, 2018, pp. 1-5. Reports that firearm homicide rates in large metro areas and the national rate overall began increasing in the years examined, and firearm suicide rates have continued to increase in large metro areas and the nation overall.
- "Employee contributions to public pension plans (2018)." *National Association of State Retirement Administrators*, October 2018, pp. 1-12. Examines employee contribution plan designs across states, policies, and recent trends. Includes a table of employee contribution rates by state, including Employees Retirement System of Texas and Teacher Retirement System of Texas.
- "Education as reeducation." By Frederick M. Hess and Grant Addison. *National Review*, November 12, 2018, pp. 48, 50, 52. Argues school reform groups, such as UnboundEd, have turned to ideological agendas and left-wing activism. Suggests a focus on implicit bias has turned school reform from a unifying pursuit to a divisive exercise.
- "Too much democracy." By Yascha Mounk. *New Yorker*, November 12, 2018, pp. 46, 48-51. Considers the findings in a new book, *Responsible Parties: Saving Democracy from Itself*, which suggests strong political parties would do better than activists in developing a long-term view aimed at rational policy choices instead of irresponsible promises. Points out the book's recommendations ignore large social and economic trends which might be more important.
- "Preparation for capable citizenship: The schools' primary responsibility." By Michael A. Rebell. *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2018, pp. 18-23. Points out the highest courts in a majority of states have stated that "preparation for capable citizenship" is a primary purpose of the education clause in state constitutions. Argues schools must create environments that respect pluralism and individualism while instructing in civic knowledge and skills and providing participatory experiences.
- "50% less energy in transportation by 2050: Alliance to Save Energy 50 x 50 Commission: Reinventing U.S. mobility." *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, November 1, 2018, pp. 76-81. Features a discussion on the Alliance to Save Energy's 50 x 50 Commission and their recent report, which compiles a set of consensus recommendations for policymakers and the private sector to reduce transportation-related energy use 50 percent by 2050. Report at: https://www.ase.org/sites/ase.org/files/ase-50x50-full_policyreport-final.pdf.
- "Could plastic driver's licenses become a thing of the past?" By Jenni Bergal. *Stateline (Pew Charitable Trusts)*, November 20, 2018, pp. 1-6. Reports several states have started digital driver's license programs while other states are studying or testing digital licenses. Discusses Louisiana's program, the first to make digital licenses available. Notes concerns about privacy and data security risks.
- "Reflections of Hurricane Harvey: One year later." By Jessica Hovel. *Texas Builder*, November/December 2018, pp. 12-18. Describes Hurricane Harvey rebuilding from a construction industry perspective, as well as infrastructure funding and flood mitigation in Houston and along the Texas Gulf Coast.
- "Evening out the scale." By Joey Berlin. *Texas Medicine*, November 2018, pp. 44-46. Describes the lack of transparency that can lead to surprise medical bills, also referred to as balance billing. Explains the Texas Medical Association's plans to advocate in the next legislative session for more accountability from insurers, while preserving physicians' right to bill for their services.
- "FCC order could remove public power pole attachment exemption." By Paul Ciampoli. *Texas Public Power*, October 2018, pp. 3, 6, 9. Explains a recent declaratory ruling and order from the Federal Communications Commission [FCC] addressing 5G infrastructure and other advanced wireless services, which could affect the oversight of electric utility pole attachments. Considers the potential impact of this ruling and order. Related information at <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-18-133A1.pdf>.

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